



D R A F T

GCSE

RELIGIOUS STUDIES A World Religions

This specification provides students with a comprehensive faith-based approach to Religious Studies focusing on topics such as beliefs and practices and religious texts.

Our new specification covers 6 religions and has been broadened out to give the option to focus on one of three major world religions (Christianity, Islam and Judaism) throughout or to study a combination of different religions including Buddhism, Sikhism and Hinduism.

What's happening to GCSEs?

OCR is offering new GCSEs for first teaching in September 2009*.

We've taken this opportunity to improve the quality of our GCSEs for teachers and students alike.

We've made improvements in three key areas: updated and relevant content, a focus on developing students' personal, learning and thinking skills, and flexible assessment, so you can choose the best learning approach for the job.

We want to make the introduction of these new GCSEs as easy for you to manage as possible.

The main changes are:

- Controlled assessment will be introduced for most subjects
- The opportunity will be taken to bring course content up to date
- Examinations should provide opportunity for extended writing and more varied question types
- All GCSEs will meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

Our approach is to provide consistency across all our GCSEs by offering the flexibility that unitised qualifications bring, allowing teaching and assessment in either a linear or unitised fashion.

*Not all GCSEs are changing. There are a few exceptions: the new Science GCSE was introduced in 2006. New English, English Literature, ICT and Maths GCSEs will be offered for first teaching in 2010.



Improving GCSE Religious Studies A: World Religions with OCR

We've involved teachers throughout the development process, so the new specifications, support materials and schemes of work should be exactly what you need to teach OCR GCSE Religious Studies A: World Religions. To ensure accuracy in our content, we've also consulted subject associations, professional membership groups, subject societies and other subject experts.



Our GCSE Religious Studies A: World Religions offers:

- A comprehensive faith-based approach to Religious Studies providing candidates with the opportunity to focus solely on one of three major world religions throughout (Christianity, Islam, Judaism) or study a combination of different religions.
- Ideal progression from earlier key stage learning which can be mapped to your local SACRE syllabus. The short course offers an ideal outcome
- The ability to top up the short course to a full course - there is also the option to combine the World Religions short course with the Philosophy and Ethics short course to make a full course GCSE in Religious Studies
- Built upon the already popular OCR World Religions specification, this specification gives students the opportunity to study different world religions in detail focusing on topics such as beliefs and practices, and sacred scriptures
- The new specification has been broadened out to cover more religions in the same detail including the optional study of texts.

Making change easy

We'd like to make these changes as easy for you to manage as possible. To minimise disruption, we will:

- Guide you through the process of moving to OCR
- Bring you the latest information through our Focus on 14–19 magazine and our new website www.GCSEchanges.com
- Show you approved specifications one year ahead of first teaching, so you have plenty of preparation time
- Offer you a range of OCR support materials, including schemes of work and sample assessment materials, as we did with A Levels
- Make OCR's publisher partner resources – tailored to the new specifications – available from January 2009
- Endorse a variety of published resources, giving you a wider choice of quality support materials.

We're also running extra INSET and training courses across the UK, so now it's even easier to discover how OCR has developed its specifications.

Controlled assessment

There is no controlled assessment for Religious Studies A: World Religions.

While reviewing GCSEs, QCA looked into the coursework element of the current qualifications and decided to introduce controlled assessment as a replacement to coursework. This will address some of the issues raised in recent coursework reviews, such as plagiarism.



Controlled assessment has to be done in a supervised environment. However, if the task has a research element, the student may complete this without supervision.

The benefits of controlled assessment include:

- More straightforward marking – for most subjects, students are provided with worksheets to submit their work on
- Improved reliability and validity
- Varying levels of control, to help you manage the assessments and your time more easily
- Greater confidence in authenticating students' work as their own
- Greater ease in fitting assessments into your normal teaching programmes.

Flexible assessment

The assessment for the new OCR GCSEs is organised into units which can either all be taken at the end of the course in a linear fashion, or be used to complement a more unitised approach to teaching and learning. This gives you the flexibility to choose the assessment approach best suited to your centre and your students. A unitised structure gives you the flexibility to co-teach short and full courses.

We already offer assessments that are organised into units at A Level and for some existing GCSEs. For many subjects, assessments will be available twice a year. Flexible assessment means:

- You will have a choice of learning approaches – linear or unitised
- The assessment can be timed to match the point of learning within the course, making it easier for candidates to show what they know, understand and can do
- Students can re-sit a unit rather than repeat the entire assessment
- Some students are motivated by ongoing feedback and this helps them identify their learning needs
- A unitised approach makes it easier for students to stay on track with their studies and manage their time effectively
- The pressure of an 'all or nothing' assessment is removed
- Examination stress is reduced by permitting assessment over a longer period so that not all assessments are concentrated in a narrow window at the end of two years

- With a similar format to A Levels and Diplomas, GCSEs will help prepare students for the next phase of their education.

To ensure that the assessment supports the coherence of the GCSEs and there is no over-assessment, QCA has put two rules in place: 40% of the assessment must happen at the end of the course and only one re-sit of each assessment unit is allowed.

You may know 'unitised' as modular.

GCSE Religious Studies A: World Religions

	Unit title and description	Assessment including duration	Weighting (including short course weightings)
World Religion 1	Unit B569 Buddhism 1 Unit B571 Christianity 1 Unit B573 Christianity (Roman Catholic) 1 Unit B575 Hinduism 1 Unit B577 Islam 1 Unit B579 Judaism 1 Unit B581 Sikhism 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Beliefs • Special Days and Pilgrimage • Major Divisions and interpretation. 	Written examination 1 hour	25% full course 50% short course
World Religion 2	Unit B570 Buddhism 2 Unit B572 Christianity 2 Unit B574 Christianity (Roman Catholic) 2 Unit B576 Hinduism 2 Unit B578 Islam 2 Unit B580 Judaism 2 Unit B582 Sikhism 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places and forms of Worship • Religion in the Faith Community and the Family • Sacred Writings. 	Written examination 1 hour	25% full course 50% short course
Scriptures/texts	Unit B583: Christian Scriptures 1 • Life of Jesus through a study of Mark.	Written examination 1 hour	25% full course 50% short course
	Unit B584: Christian Scriptures 2 • Teachings of Jesus through a study of Luke.	Written examination 1 hour	25% full course 50% short course
	Unit B585: Jewish Scriptures 1 • The nature of the Tenakh • The covenant relationship between G-d and the Israelites • The roles and the uses of the Tenakh and the Covenant in Daily life and worship.	Written examination 1 hour	25% full course 50% short course
	Unit B586: Jewish Scriptures 2 • The nature of the Talmud • The role and the uses Talmud in Daily Life and Worship.	Written examination 1 hour	25% full course 50% short course
	Unit B587: Muslim Texts 1 • Qur'an.	Written examination 1 hour	25% full course 50% short course
	Unit B588: Muslim Texts 2 • Sunnah and Hadith.	Written examination 1 hour	25% full course 50% short course
Ethics	Unit B603: Ethics Any of the following religions can be studied through this unit: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism or Sikhism. • Religion and Human Relationships • Religion and Medical Ethics • Religion, Poverty & Wealth.	Written examination 1 hour	25% full course 50% short course

To achieve the full course, candidates take four units: any one of the world religions units (B569-B582) and any three other units (B569-B588, B603).

Assessment objectives

The assessment objectives are designed to reflect the non-statutory guidelines for Religious Studies A: World Religions.

Candidates are expected to demonstrate the following in the context of the content described:

AO1

- Describe, explain and analyse, using knowledge and understanding.

AO2

- Use evidence and reasoned argument to express and evaluate personal responses, informed insights and differing viewpoints.

Religious Studies World Religions

GCSE Short course World Religions (2 units)

+

2 further World Religions units

=

Full course GCSE Religious Studies: World Religions

Religious Studies Philosophy and Ethics

GCSE Short course Philosophy and Ethics (2 units)

+

2 remaining Philosophy and Ethics units

=

Full course GCSE Religious Studies: Philosophy and Ethics

To achieve the short course, candidates take two units: any one of the world religions units (B569-B582) and any one other unit (B569-B588, B603).

Short courses

We also offer a short course in GCSE Religious Studies A: World Religions, equivalent to half a GCSE. This offers several advantages:

- There are only two units to complete.
- Students can study a wider range of subjects.
- Timetabling for shorter courses can be easier for your centre.
- More able students can complement their studies by taking additional short courses.
- Short courses can be spread over one or two years.
- Short course achievement can be 'topped up' to full course by completing a further 2 units.
- Short course World Religions can be combined with short course Philosophy & Ethics to achieve a full course GCSE Religious Studies.

Religious Studies

Full course GCSE Religious Studies



	What changes?	What stays the same?
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a unitised approach to content • Candidates study four units for a full course, and two units for a short course. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The allocation of topics to the world religions units.
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christianity through a study of either Luke or Mark has been divided into two units • There is an option to study two gospels instead of one • Two optional units on Jewish scriptures have been added • Two optional units on Muslim texts have been added • Content has been revised and updated to reflect the faith-specific language • Christian Perspectives unit is now called Ethics and can be studied from the perspective of other religions • Religion Media and the Entertainment unit has been withdrawn from World Religions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main topics for study within the world religions units remain the same. Some language and key areas have been revised to ensure that they are still up to date and relevant, they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Core beliefs o Special days and pilgrimages o Major divisions and interpretations o Places and forms of worship o Religion in the faith community and family o Sacred writings • The opportunity to study Christian scriptures.
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no coursework/controlled assessment • All examinations are 1 hour • There are two assessment objectives instead of three • The allocation of marks to questions has changed to reflect the 50/50 weighting of the assessment objectives • The full course is now four examination papers instead of two/three • Candidates will be asked to complete two questions from a choice of three • Unit B603 is available for assessment in January and June. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The question pattern and structure remains the same • The part C question includes a prompt • The overall examination time remains the same • Candidates will be required to answer the same number of questions.

Support for GCSE Religious Studies A: World Religions teachers

OCR offers a range of support materials, developed following extensive research and consultation with teachers. We've designed them to save you time when preparing for the new specifications and to support you while teaching them.

Our support materials and events include face-to-face training courses, schemes of work that you can customise, endorsed publisher partner resources, access to teacher and examiner networks (both online and offline), plus an extensive past-papers service.

OCR's online resources include:

- E-communities – online networks of subject specialists for sharing knowledge, views and ideas
- Interchange – a completely free and secure website that helps you carry out the administrative tasks associated with examinations quickly and easily
- Past examination papers
- Marking schemes
- Subject e-alerts – for teachers who register for updates.

We offer a wide range of training courses in the UK, so you have easy access to information about our new specifications – direct from the experts. See opposite for more details.



Training for OCR GCSE Religious Studies A: World Religions

Our Get Ready events offer a taste of the new specification. Dates are given below, and you can book your place now at www.GCSEchanges.com/keydates.asp.

Later, we'll be running our Get Started events, which take you through the specification in more detail and help you work towards first teaching. They will take place during the spring and summer terms 2009.

Get Ready – introducing the new specification (first teaching from September 2009)

This course is for all teachers – new and experienced – who are interested in finding out more about the new specification. It's open to you, even if you don't teach the current OCR specification.

It's a **FREE** half-day session, including refreshments, a light finger buffet and course materials, offering an overview of the new OCR specification in GCSE Religious Studies A: World Religions. Key features include:

- A look at the new structure, content and assessment methods
- A comparison between old and new specification content
- An introduction to the support and resources available from OCR
- A summary of the benefits of choosing the new OCR specification.

Date	Location	Course code
Thurs 3 Jul 08 AM	London	ORSA101
Thurs 3 Jul 08 PM	London	ORSA102
Thurs 18 Sept 08 AM	Birmingham	ORSA103
Thurs 18 Sept 08 PM	Birmingham	ORSA104
Tues 30 Sept 08 AM	Southampton	ORSA105
Tues 30 Sept 08 PM	Southampton	ORSA106
Fri 17 Oct 08 AM	London	ORSA107
Fri 17 Oct 08 PM	London	ORSA108
Thurs 6 Nov 08 AM	Manchester	ORSA109
Thurs 6 Nov 08 PM	Manchester	ORSA110
Fri 16 Jan 09 AM	London	ORSA111
Fri 16 Jan 09 PM	London	ORSA112

Please note:

- Free OCR Training courses will not incur any penalty fees however, so that we can offer your place to another delegate please notify us in good time of your course cancellation.
- Dates are subject to change so please ensure you read your booking confirmation and web updates as OCR Training cannot be held responsible for delegates who attend on an incorrect date.
- Courses throughout summer 2008 and autumn 2008 terms may be based on the draft specification.
- *The times of these courses may vary from the standard advertised time.
- Delegates may attend an AM only session, PM only session or both AM and PM sessions, where two different specifications are being covered on the same day.
- On your booking form, you must put course codes for all sessions you wish to attend, failure to do so may result in you being booked onto incorrect sessions.

Publishing support for GCSE Religious Studies A: World Religions teachers

We're working with publisher partner
Heinemann to provide further resources to
support teachers of the new specification.

Resource	Format	Samples available from
6 x student topic books	Print	March 2009
Teacher resource with LiveText CD-ROM	Print and electronic	March 2009
Revision guide	Print	March 2009



To find the latest information on published
resources, please visit
www.ocr.org.uk/religiousstudiesa/newgcse
and choose published resources from the
right-hand menu.

www.ocr.org.uk

OCR customer contact centre

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